

Amendments to the Claims:

A listing of the entire set of pending claims (including amendments to the claims, if any) is submitted herewith per 37 CFR 1.121. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A mask, comprising:

a mask substrate;
a half-tone layer of half-tone mask material arranged in a pattern across the mask substrate; and
a light-blocking layer of light blocking material arranged in a pattern across the half-tone layer;

wherein the half-tone mask material is silicon-rich silicon nitride $\text{SiN}_x:\text{H}$ with x in the range 0 to 1, and wherein a thickness of the half-tone layer and x are selected to provided a transmittance in the range of 20% to 80%.

2. (Currently amended) The mask of claim 1 wherein the silicon-rich silicon nitride layer has a value of x in the range 0.2 to 0.6 and an optical band gap of from 2.1eV to 2.5eV.

3. (Currently amended) The mask of claim 1 wherein the silicon-rich silicon nitride layer has a thickness of from 40nm to 100nm.

4. (Withdrawn) Use of the mask of claim 1 including exposing a layer of photoresist by passing ultra-violet light through the mask onto the layer of photoresist to define fully removed regions in which the photoresist is fully removed, thick regions having a first thickness and thin regions having a thickness less than the first thickness in the regions exposed through the half-tone regions.

5-8. (Cancelled)

9. (New) The mask of claim 1 wherein the silicon-rich silicon nitride layer has a value of x in the range 0.2 to 0.5 and an optical band gap of from 2.1eV to 2.35eV.

10. (New) The mask of claim 1 wherein the silicon-rich silicon nitride layer has a thickness of 60nm and an optical band gap of 2.3eV.

11. (New) The mask of claim 1 wherein the thickness of the half-tone layer and x are selected to provided a transmittance in the range of 40% to 80%.